

Saturday Magazine.

No. 609.

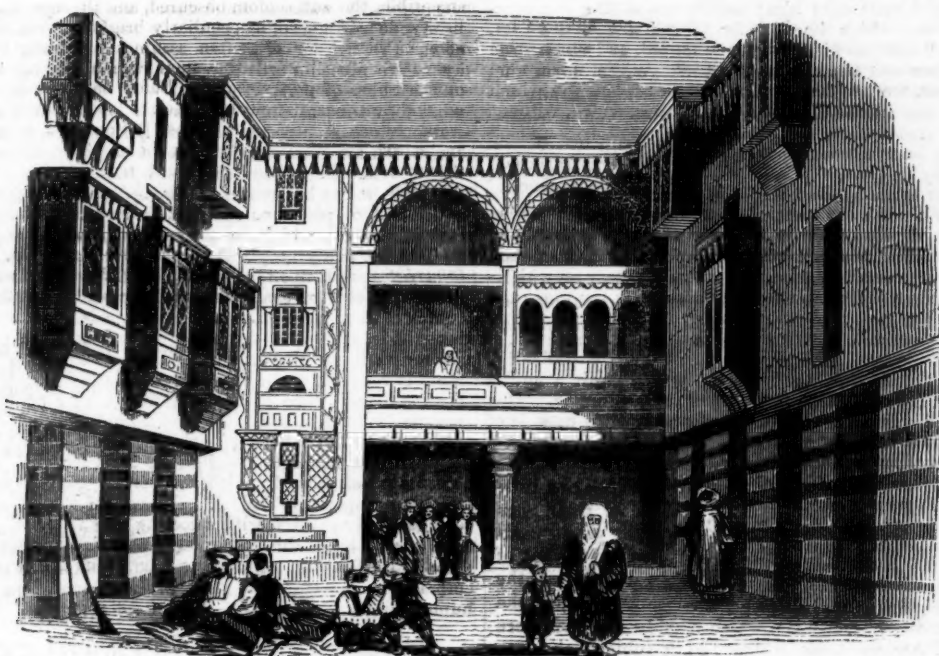
SUPPLEMENT,

DECEMBER, 1841.

PRICE
ONE PENNY.



THE HOUSES OF ALL NATIONS. III.



INTERIOR OF AN ORIENTAL HOUSE.

1. HOUSES OF NORTHERN AFRICA AND EGYPT.

THE inhabitants of Northern Africa have for several centuries been connected together by certain ties which enable us for some purposes to consider them as one people. Morocco, Tunis, Fez, and till lately Algiers, have all had Mohammedanism as the recognised religion of the state. Their mosques are similar, their manners are similar, and, as may be supposed, their dwellings also belong, in their general characters, to one class. All the countries which we have mentioned, lie pretty nearly under the same latitude, and are exposed to about an equal temperature, a circumstance that has much influence on the form of the buildings. Under the general name of *Barbary*, therefore, we will now consider the principal features in the houses of the better classes of the inhabitants.

Large doors, spacious chambers, marble pavements, cloistered courts, and fountains, are very general in these countries, and accord well with the nature of the climate. The windows, too, open not into the street, but into the central courts or quadrangles, a type of the jealous dispositions of the inhabitants. The streets are generally narrow, probably to shield the houses as much as possible from the sun. The entrance to a house from the street is through a porch or gateway, with benches on each side, where the master of the family receives visits and despatches business. From hence an opening is seen into the quadrangle or court, which is open above, and is generally paved with marble. When a large assembly is to be received, such as upon the occasion of any grand entertainment, the court is the place of reception, where mats and carpets are spread for the company. It has been supposed by Dr. Shaw, that on most of the occasions when our Saviour and his apostles are said to have entered houses and preached there, &c., the court or quadrangle was the place of reception; for there are many points of resemblance between the houses of Judæa and those of Barbary.

VOL. XIX.

In the warm season, this court is covered by an awning to protect the visitors from the heat of sun: this awning is stretched out by ropes, and can be folded or drawn out at pleasure. The court is generally surrounded with a colonnade, over which there is a gallery of the same width as the colonnade, with a balustrade or lattice-work in front of it. From the colonnade and gallery there are openings into large spacious chambers, of the same length with the court, but seldom communicating with one another. One of them frequently serves for a whole family, particularly when a father allows his married children to live in the same house with him, or when two or more persons join in the rental of one house. The walls of these chambers, in the houses of the wealthy, are covered, from the middle downwards, with white, blue, red or green hangings, either of velvet or of damask: these are suspended by hooks, so as to be taken down at pleasure. Above these hangings is a more permanent covering for the wall, such as stucco, fretwork, paintings, &c. The ceiling is generally of wainscot, and painted in various devices, frequently including sentences from the Koran. The floors are generally covered with painted tiles: but as the Moors seldom use any sort of seat equivalent to our chair, the floor is covered with carpets and mats of rich materials, on which the inmates either sit cross-legged or lie at full length. Near the wall, however, is frequently placed a kind of raised platform, on which are narrow beds or mattresses, as well as pillows.

The stairs to the upper story, when there is more than one, are situated sometimes in the porch, and at others in the court. This staircase leads not only to the upper story, but also to the gallery and to the roof of the house, where the Moors pass much of their time in the evening. The flat roofs are covered with plaster, and are surrounded either by low walls or by balustrades. The terraces serve for many domestic purposes for the use of the inmates: linen is dried there: figs and raisins are exposed there to the heat of the sun: it is also frequently used as a place of devotion.

Many of these houses have a smaller one attached to them, consisting of one or two rooms and a terrace. Some of them are built over the porch or gateway of the larger house, to which there is a door of communication. These smaller houses are frequently used as places of retirement from the bustle of the central quadrangle. It has been supposed that many of the houses in Syria, Palestine, &c., were anciently provided with little retired chambers such as we here speak of,—that is, chambers secluded in some degree from the rest of the habitable mansion. The following passages in the Bible seem to allude to some arrangement of this kind: 2 Kings 4. 10, "Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick,"—Judges iii. 20, "And Ehud came unto him; and he was sitting in a summer parlour, which he had for himself alone,"—2 Sam. xviii. 23, "And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept." While we are on this subject, we may briefly allude to an explanation which Dr. Shaw has offered of a part of Scripture, which, without knowing the structure of the houses in the countries alluded to, cannot be well understood. In St. Mark ii. 2, we read, "And they came unto him bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne by four. And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay." Now in such houses as we are accustomed to, it would appear more difficult to make a sufficiently large hole through the roof than to force a passage through the throng. But by considering the nature of the houses in those climates, Dr. Shaw thinks the following explanation will remove every difficulty. The only part of a house large enough to admit a multitude of people was the open court or quadrangle. This court was covered in hot weather by an awning capable of being drawn aside by means of ropes. The tops of the houses were flat, so that persons could walk from roof to roof without difficulty, and stairs led up to the roof. It therefore seems probable, that the sick man was carried up to the roof of the house, that the awning was drawn aside, and that he was lowered into the open court by ropes.

That portion of Northern Africa occupied by Algiers need not claim our attention here, for in so far as it differs, in the construction of its houses, from the countries of Barbary generally, the Supplements which have been given on the subject of Algiers in the *Saturday Magazine* will have conveyed a sufficient idea. We will therefore proceed eastward, and approach countries which have filled a more important page in history. The territory once known by the famed name of Carthage occupied a portion of the space between Egypt and what is now called Algiers, but at present, little exists here to claim notice in this paper.

Egypt has many remarkable peculiarities, chiefly arising from the mixture of Turkish and Arabic manners and modes of living prevalent in the country. The houses of Egypt depend a good deal, for their form and character, on the religion of the inhabitants; they have in general either one or two stories above the ground floor, and there is often a small unpaved court in the middle of the building, with various apartments surrounding it. There is a narrow passage leading into this court from the street, and in the passage is a stone seat for the porter and other servants. In the court itself is generally to be seen a well for supplying the house with water; and the windows of the principal apartments look into the court, several doors leading from the court to the rooms: in all these cases there is one door leading exclusively to the women's apartments. The apartment in which strangers are received is generally on the ground floor, with a grated or latticed window looking into the court. This reception-room has generally a fountain in the middle, and is paved with black and white marble. Along two sides of the room runs a raised platform covered with mats and carpets, and visitors generally take off their shoes before they step upon this. The mode in which persons seat themselves in such countries will assist us in explaining many of the customs mentioned in the Holy Scriptures. The matted or carpeted floor is frequently the only seat, and if shoes, soiled with the dust of the streets, were to tread on this matting, the garments would certainly be disfigured by it: hence a sense of cleanliness, as well as certain rites connected with religion, lead the inhabitants to take off their shoes previous to stepping upon the raised platform. There are, however, frequently mattresses and cushions, stuffed with cotton and covered with cloth or silk, ranged round the sides of the

apartment. The walls of this apartment contain recesses and cupboards, for the reception of water-bottles, coffee-cups, and other domestic vessels. The ceiling of the room is divided into compartments: those parts over the two raised platforms being formed of carved beams of wood; while that over the central part is carved into highly decorated and fanciful ornaments, and painted of very diverse colours. A chandelier is frequently suspended from the centre.

All the apartments are lofty, generally about fourteen feet high. The upper rooms have often, besides lattice-work windows, others of coloured glass, representing flowers, fruit, birds, &c. These coloured windows are about two feet high and one wide: they are placed above the other windows, and are more for ornament than for use. "On the plastered walls of some apartments," says Mr. Lane, "are rude paintings of the temple of Mekkeh, or of the tomb of the Prophet, or of flowers and other objects, executed by native Mooslim artists, who have not the least notion of the rules of perspective, and who consequently deface what they thus attempt to decorate. Sometimes, also, the walls are ornamented with Arabic inscriptions, of maxims, &c, which are more usually written on paper, in an embellished style, and inclosed in glazed frames. No chambers are furnished as bed-rooms. The bed, in the day-time, is rolled up, and placed on one side, or in an adjoining closet, called *khuzneh*, which, in the winter, is a sleeping place: in summer, many people sleep upon the house-top. A mat or carpet, spread upon the raised part of the stone floor, and a *deewan*, (a row of cushions round the wall,) constitute the complete furniture of a room. For meals, a round tray is brought in, and placed upon a low stool, and the company sit round it on the ground. There is no fireplace: the room is warmed, when necessary, by burning charcoal in a chafing-dish." The kitchens, however, have several small receptacles for fire, constructed on a kind of bench of brick. Many houses have at the top a sloping shed of boards, directed towards the north or north-west, in order that the cool breezes which blow from those quarters may be conveyed to an open apartment below. The roof of the house is flat, and generally covered with a coating of plaster.

For a notice of the houses and domestic arrangements of Cairo in particular, we refer to our recent sketches of that capital.

2. HOUSES OF ASIATIC TURKEY.

Africa is united to Asia in a singular manner. The two continents are connected only by a narrow slip of land,—the isthmus of Suez,—and this isthmus, as well as the country near it, is little better than a dreary desert. Having passed this desert, we come to Palestine, and, keeping along the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, we arrive at Jaffa, Acre, Aleppo, and other towns. After this, the great peninsula of Asia Minor brings us to the Black Sea, and the provinces of European Turkey. Now throughout this range of country, Turkish influence is more or less prevalent, and there are a good many features common to all the towns extending from Jerusalem at the south-east to Smyrna at the north-west. The city of Aleppo is well situated as a representative of the towns of Western Asia generally. To the north of it is Asia Minor: to the south, Palestine; and to the east, are those numerous provinces which have, at one time or other, formed part of the Persian Empire. Its houses, as well as its inhabitants, present features of the Turkish, Persian, Syriac, and Arabian countries: and we shall do well to consider rather minutely the nature of the dwellings.

Aleppo is governed by a bashaw or officer, and the residence of this officer, as well as of the other principal officers of state, are called *Seraglios*, (a Persian word for a palace or great house.) These seraglios are huge piles of building, with nothing like architectural grace about them. The entrance is through a large court; and the gate is arched and decorated with marble. Persons of rank pass on horseback directly to the foot of the grand staircase. The state apartments are of an oblong form, with lofty flat ceilings, and are well lighted by a row of large windows. The walls and ceilings are adorned with flowers, fruit, and fanciful ornaments, painted, gilt and varnished: and verses from the Koran are seldom omitted as part of the decoration. Each state apartment has an elevated platform on each side constituting a *divan*, where distinguished visitors are invited to seat themselves. The divan is covered with mattresses, over which is thrown a covering of cloth; and oblong cushions, stuffed with cotton and faced with silk or velvet, are ranged round next the wall:—the corners of

these divans are considered as the places of honour. The lower and central part of the apartment is occupied by pages and others; indeed all visitors, except those of rank, are to remain on the central division of the room, and must not presume to step on the divan.

The apartments of the principal officers are fitted up on the same plan, but with less splendour: the divans in their rooms being made to serve as beds at night, by employing additional mattresses and coverlids.

The women's apartments are always separated from the main part of the building, and consist of several suites of rooms, ranged round an open court. This court contains a shrubbery, a basin with a fountain, arbours of slight latticed frames, and other arrangements for producing a cool place of retreat from the heat incident to the climate. There are also two open apartments, called the *divan*, and the *kaah*, which are a sort of open reception rooms, where the different members of a family may congregate. These are particularly delightful, from the means taken,—such as fountains, &c.,—to make them cool. The private apartments of the females are ranged round the court, with windows looking into the court, to the exclusion of any other. The sleeping rooms are usually on the ground floor, and the visiting, or reception rooms are above them.

Such are the general modes of construction in the mansions of the bashaws, agas, effendis, and officers of government, at Aleppo.

The houses of the merchants seldom have a court in front, the entrance being immediately from the street, by a large door. The outer apartments are small, and furnished in a plain but neat manner. They serve only for the reception of familiar visitors in the morning, or at supper: for on extraordinary occasions, the harems, or female apartments, are made use of, which, in point of elegance, often rival those of the seraglios, and in the richness of the furniture sometimes excel them.

The houses of the Turks of middle rank have seldom more than one court; but many of them have a *kaah*, and all have a divan, with a little garden and fountain before it. Their habitations are thus airy, and kept very neat. From this rank, down to the lowest order of Turks, there are houses of various degrees of comfort; but they have nearly all something which they can call a divan, and a few bushes or shrubs by way of garden:—their best room is rudely painted, and decorated with such ornaments as they can procure.

The houses of the Christians of the upper class consist generally of a central court surrounded by apartments. The entrance to these houses is scarcely to be distinguished from those of the Turks; and the interior is fitted up with a good deal of taste and neatness.

The Jews, both European and native, have houses built much on the same fashion as the other inhabitants of the city; and in some instances their dwellings display no little magnificence within. The poorer classes of Jews, however, are worse lodged than the poor of the other religious communities.

The roofs of nearly all the better kinds of houses are flat, and plastered with a composition of mortar, tar, ashes, and sand, which in time becomes very hard; but, when not laid on at the proper season, the terrace is apt to crack in the winter. These flat roofs or terraces are separated by parapet walls, and most of the natives sleep on them in summer. The Europeans who live contiguous have doors of communication, and by means of the terraces on their own houses and those on the bazaars, can make a large circuit without descending into the street. The native inhabitants, however, do not throw open a whole line of terraces in this way; but frequently heighten the wall of division by means of a screen.

We will avail ourselves of the present opportunity for speaking of a part of the domestic arrangement which in warm climates has a considerable influence on the construction of a town, as well as upon the manners of the inhabitants,—we mean the custom of bathing. Not only does a sultry climate occasion a necessity for a frequent use of the bath, but the Mohammedan religion requires that ablutions should be made at certain hours of the day. Most of the large mansions in Persia, Turkey, Syria, Egypt, Barbary, &c., have baths within them; but the general custom is, to attend public baths, a large number of which are to be found in most of their cities. These baths or bagnios being pretty nearly the same everywhere, we will take those of Aleppo as a general representative of all, and will avail ourselves of Dr. Russell's account of them.

The outer room of the hummair or bagnio is called the *burany*, and is large, lofty, covered with a dome, and paved with marble. It has windows towards the street, but is lighted chiefly by the lantern of the dome. A broad stone platform, or *mustaby*, about four feet high, is built close to the wall on each side, which being spread with mats and carpets, forms a divan on which the bathers may undress and repose. A large marble fountain in the middle serves both as an ornament, and for rinsing the bagnio linen, which is afterwards hung to dry on lines stretched above. The bathers, as well as the servants, walk in this outer chamber in slippers, for the stoves having but small influence there, the wet pavement is cold to the naked feet.

From the *burany* a door opens into a narrow passage, leading to the *wastany*, or middle chamber, which has a *mustaby*, or raised platform, for the accommodation of such as may choose to sit there, and is furnished with several round or oblong stone basins, about a foot and a half in diameter, into each of which two pipes open with brass cocks, the one conveying hot, the other cold water. These are called *juru*, and are fixed to the wall two feet from the pavement. There are also brazen bowls for laving out the water. The thermometer in the *burany* is about 64° Fahr.;—in the passage 75°—and in the *wastany*, or middle chamber, 90°.

From the middle chamber, a door opens immediately into the inner chamber, or *juany*, which is much larger than the *wastany*, and heated to about 100°. It has no *mustaby*, or platform, so that the bathers sit or recline on the pavement, which towards the centre is excessively hot. The middle and inner rooms are less lofty than the outer one, and are covered with small cupolas, from which they receive a dull light, by means of a few round apertures, glazed with a thick coloured glass. At each corner of the *juany* is a small open recess, in one of which there is a basin about four feet deep, called the *murtas*, serving occasionally for a temperate bath. The bagnios are heated by stoves underneath, and the ordinary temperature is about 100°.

It must be borne in mind, that the mode of bathing adopted in these countries is altogether different from that employed in England. There is no plunging into a large body of water, and in a few minutes emerging from it. The bather, first, in the outer room, throws off his usual dress, and puts on a slight bathing dress. He then passes into the middle room, and gets gradually warmed by its temperature. From thence he passes into the inner or bath room, which is heated so highly that in a few minutes he is in a profuse perspiration. He then lies down on the warm marble pavement, and is rubbed all over by an attendant, with a kind of perfumed soap; after which he is well drenched by bowls of warm clean water, and rubbed with dry towels. The bathing being thus completed, he passes into the middle room, puts on his slippers, wraps himself completely in a blanket, and then smokes a cigar, drinks coffee, and converses with his friends or neighbours:—indeed, this middle room is a general place of rendezvous for friends, who often go to the bath as much to meet one another as for the pleasure of bathing. This is particularly the case with females: by the customs of the country they are so much immured, that they are glad of the relief from constraint afforded by the bath; and it is not unusual for them to take sweetmeats, fruits, spices, &c., to regale themselves and friends in the middle chamber, after having taken the bath. Lady M. W. Montagu tells us that this is then a famous place for gossip. When the bathers have remained as long as they please in the middle room, they proceed to the outer room, resume their dresses, and leave the place. There are some baths for men, and others for women; and a third class devoted to women in the forenoon, and men in the afternoon; the bathers being attended by servants of their own sex.

3. HOUSES OF PERSIA AND ARABIA.

The most general characteristics of the houses of the wealthier classes in Persia have been the same from age to age, and the accounts of different travellers pretty well agree on the subject. Generally speaking, such houses are built in the middle of a fine garden, and present little or none of their beauty to the street; for there is little else to be seen but a dead wall, with a great gate in the middle of it, and perhaps a screen or wall within the gate, to prevent passers-by from seeing the mansion,—great privacy being sought for in this respect. It is not often that the Persian mansions have more than one story,—indeed, in most warm climates, the houses are more remarkable for length and depth than for height. In the portion of the house nearest the entrance gate is generally a little piazza

or open room, where the general business of the inhabitant is transacted. Beyond this piazza is a large hall, from twelve to twenty feet high, which is the place of meeting, on the occasion of great entertainments, &c. On the hinder side of the house is often another piazza, with a fountain playing in front of it, beyond which shady walks are frequently seen. At each corner of the large hall is a parlour, or dwelling room, between which are small open square courts, with entrances from the great hall: the object of this and similar arrangements seems to be, that in a climate so sultry as that of Persia, it is desirable to have as many open doors as possible, to admit air into the central hall: there is often a fountain playing in the middle of the hall.

The walls of the houses are built sometimes of burned bricks, and sometimes of bricks dried in the sun. The walls are of considerable thickness, and the roof of the great hall is arched, and some feet higher than the smaller rooms near it. The roofs of the buildings on every side of the hall are flat, and have stairs leading up to them. These flat roofs form one of the most distinguishing features of Asiatic dwellings. Nothing can exceed the beauty of the sky at those hours of the evening when the sun has withdrawn his scorching rays. It is at such a time that the Persian, taking up a mattress to the roof, there luxuriates in the indolent enjoyment of the open air:—often, indeed, he passes the night there, except at certain seasons, when, in consequence of the powerful evaporation during the day, a piercing cold is felt at night.

The kitchens, and other domestic offices of the house, are generally at some distance to the right or left, and the hall is the medium of communication between all of them. Sometimes the rooms have chimneys, but at other times there is an arrangement of a charcoal fire thus managed:—A hole, four or five feet in diameter, and one or two deep, is sunk in the floor of the room, and in this is kindled a charcoal fire. The hole is covered over with a thick board, and this again is covered with a carpet, so that persons by sitting round in a circle, and placing their feet under the carpet, can keep themselves warm in cold weather. Air is admitted to the fire, and smoke is conducted from it, by pipes laid beneath the floor. The floors of the rooms are either paved, or covered with a hard cement, on which a coarse cloth is laid, and over that a carpet. The walls of some of the rooms are lined with fine tiles a part of the way up, and are painted above.

Such are the general characters of the houses in that wide expanse of country included under the general name of Persia. But it must be here understood, that these remarks apply chiefly to the large towns; for in the wide and uncultivated wastes which cover so large a portion of the Persian empire, the same kind of rude and temporary tents are observable as are employed by the roving Arabs. In a country like England, we happily do not know what it is to have our large towns separated from each other by sandy wastes, where neither man nor beast can find food and water without great difficulty:—the arrangements of a manufacturing town and those of an agricultural village are certainly sufficiently distinct; but still, a roving population, who, when they have gathered all the herbage and fruits at one part of the country, strike their tents, and proceed in a body to another locality, is unknown to us, however much it prevails in Persia.

These remarks apply also to Arabia. We have, however, nothing to say here of the roving tribes, but shall briefly speak of the populous towns. The city of Mecca consists of streets arranged with tolerable regularity, and there is something more pleasing in the fronts of the houses than is usually observed in Oriental towns. The houses have generally two rows of windows, with balconies covered with blinds. There are even several large windows, quite open, as in Europe, but the greater number are covered with a curtain, like a Venetian blind, made of palm-leaves: these blinds are extremely light, and screen the apartments from the sun, without interrupting the passage of the air: they fold up at pleasure at the upper part. The houses are solidly built with stone, and are three, four, and even more stories in height. The fronts are ornamented with bases, mouldings, and paintings, which give them a very graceful appearance. It is very rare to find a door that has not a base, with steps and small seats on both sides. The blinds of the balconies are not very close, and holes are cut in different parts of them. The roofs of the houses form terraces, surrounded with a wall about seven feet high, open at certain spaces which are occupied by a railing of red and white bricks, placed symmetrically, leaving holes for the circula-

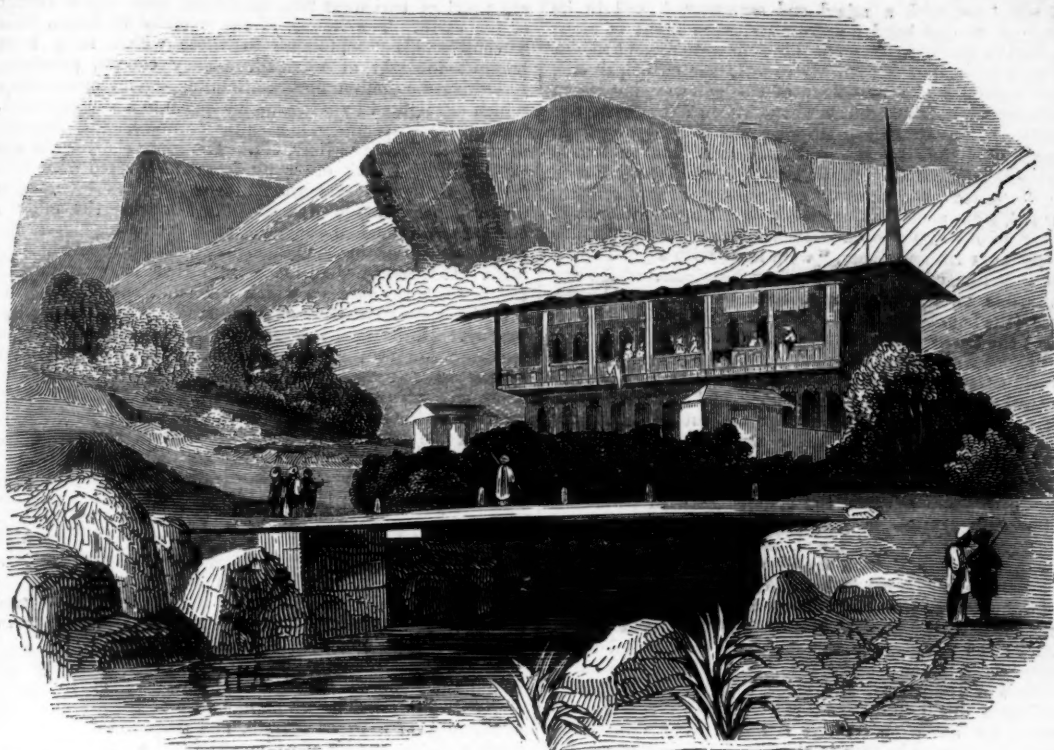
tion of the air. All the staircases are narrow, dark, and steep. The rooms are well-proportioned, large, and lofty, and have, besides the large windows and balconies, a second row of smaller windows. The beauty of the houses may be considered as the remains of the ancient splendour of Mecca. Every inhabitant has an interest in adorning his dwelling, in order to induce the hadgi, or pilgrims, to lodge with him during their sojourn at Mecca, for this is one of the principal sources of wealth to the inhabitants, on account of the high terms demanded and paid.

Another town in Arabia of which we may briefly speak is Mocha, a name rendered familiar to us by the excellent coffee brought from its neighbourhood. In this town the principal buildings, such as the residences of the government officers and principal inhabitants, have no pretensions, externally, to architectural elegance, but still are not devoid of beauty, from their turretted tops and fantastic ornaments in white stucco. The windows are in general small, stuck into the wall in an irregular manner, closed with lattices, and sometimes opening into a wooden, carved-work balcony. In the upper apartments there is generally a range of circular windows, above the others, filled, instead of glass, with a thin layer of a peculiar transparent stone, which is found in veins in a mountain near Sanaa. None of these can be opened, and only a few of the lower ones,—a consequence of which is that a thorough current of fresh air is rare in these houses, yet the people who inhabit them do not appear to be oppressed by the heat, although it is insupportable to European visitors. The floors as well as the roofs of the larger houses are made of *chunam*, which is sustained by beams with pieces of plank or thin slips of wood, laid across and close to each other. As a carpenter's level is seldom used in their buildings, the floors are generally very uneven; but where couches and cushions are used instead of chairs and tables, this is not felt to be much inconvenience. The internal construction of the houses is generally bad: the passages are long and narrow, and the staircases so steep that it is frequently difficult to mount them. Very little time is used in the construction of any of these buildings: constant care is therefore necessary to prevent the introduction of moisture. With caution, the houses last many years, but if neglected, they soon become a heap of rubbish, for the sun-dried bricks then resume their original form of mud.

The streets and bazaars of Mocha present a lively appearance, from the commingling of many different classes and ranks of people. Lord Valentia says:—"Under the coarse awnings of its narrow bazaars you meet the well-dressed merchants in robes of woollen cloth, and from above the folds of the snow-white turban you see a red woollen cap, with a tassel of purple silk. At every step you meet the black, the half-naked Abyssinian, straight as the young areca, with a nose sufficiently prominent to give expression to his features, and having his curled woolly hair dyed with a reddish yellow,—the foppery of his country. Then there is the stout Arab porter, in his coarse brown garment, bowing under a heavy load of dates, the matting all oozing, and clammy with the luscious burden. Lastly, you have the Bedouin, with the hue of the desert on his cheek, the sinewy limb, the eye dark and fiery. He hath a small turban, a close-bodied vest, a coarse sash, all of dull colours; the arm, the leg, are bare; the brown bosom, open to the sun and wind; sandals on his feet; a broad, straight, two-edged sword in his hand; a long and ready poniard in his girdle. For the cold night wind he has a cloak of goat's hair, or black or white, or made in long broad stripes of both colours. He walks erect, and moves directly to his front, giving place to none. . . . Then there are the cook-shops, with their hot cakes of bread, and their large coppers, with portions of meat and fowls, swimming in ghee, and ready for the traveller. And a step farther the caravanserais and coffee-houses, with groups of townsmen and traders, reclining on couches of the date-leaf, smoking their small hookahs, sipping their kishu, and perpetually stroking their long beards." There are other towns in Arabia, such as Medina, and Aden, once a very important port at the southern entrance into the Red Sea. But neither of these need call for particular notice here: Medina presents many features similar to Mecca, and Aden to Mocha.

4. HOUSES OF INDIA AND CHINA.

We will travel eastward, and notice the recent seat of war, Afghanistan.—The houses of the higher classes in Afghanistan are described with some minuteness by the Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone, in his *Account of the Kingdom of*



INDIAN MOUNTAIN DWELLING.

Candul. The class of inhabitants whose dwellings he thus portrays, includes all the Douranee chiefs and heads of tribes, with the Persians and Tanjiks, who hold offices about the king. "These residences," says our author, "are all enclosed by high walls, and contain (besides stables, lodging for servants, &c.) three or four different courts, generally laid out in gardens, with ponds and fountains. One side of each court is occupied by a building, comprising various small apartments in two or three stories, and some large halls, which occupy the middle of the building for its whole height. The halls are supported by tall wooden pillars and Moorish arches, carved, ornamented, and painted like the rest of the hall. The upper rooms open on the halls by galleries which run along halfway up the wall, and are set off with pillars and arches. The halls, being only separated by pillars and sashes of open wood-work, can always be thrown into one by removing the sashes. The back of the innermost one is a solid wall, in which is the fire-place. The upper part of this wall is ornamented with false arches, which look like a continuation of the galleries, and which, as well as the real arches, are filled up on great occasions with paintings in oil, looking-glasses, and other ornaments. There are smaller rooms along the other sides of the court-yards; and among them are comfortable apartments for the retirement of the master of the house, one of which, at least, is fitted up with glass windows for cold weather. There are fire-places in many of these different apartments. The walls and pillars are ornamented with flowers in various patterns, painted in distemper, or in oil, on a white ground, composed of a sort of whitewash, mixed with shining particles, which is called *seem gil*, or silver earth. The doors are of carved wood, and, in winter, are covered with curtains of velvet, embroidered cloth, and brocade. In all the rooms, at a height which is easily within reach, are arched recesses in the walls, which are painted very richly, and, by a strange depravity of taste, are thought to be embellished by glass bottles of various coloured pickles and preserves. The poor also have these recesses, which they ornament with China cups, and in which they store their fruits for winter consumption: the curtains in their houses are of quilted chintz, or of canvas, painted with birds, beasts, flowers, &c., in oil. The pictures in the houses of the rich are mostly, if not entirely, done in Persia: the figures are old Persian kings and warriors, young men and women drinking together, or scenes from some of the Persian poems. The principal

ornaments of the rooms of the great, are carpets and felts, which serve them in place of all other furniture. Persian carpets are too well known in England to require any description, but there is a kind made in Herat which excels all others I ever saw; they are made of wool, but so fine and glossy, and dyed with such brilliant colours, that they appear to be of silk; carpets of highly wrought shawl are also used; but this piece of magnificence must be very rarely used from the enormous expense*.

"There are felts for sitting on," spread close to the wall all round the room, except where the entrance is, which, in the halls, is always at one end. They are brownish-grey, with patterns of flowers in dim colours; that at the top of the room is broader than the others, which are about three feet and a half or four feet broad. On the upper felt are smaller carpets of embroidered silk or velvet, with cushions of velvet for distinguished visitors."

The peninsula of India, like most countries which have had many conquerors, presents a great diversity of dwellings, not only in splendour and costliness, but also in style. As, however, the Hindoos are the people who are most peculiarly connected with that country, we will give a brief sketch of the dwellings of Hindoos of rank. Benares presents the most marked appearance of Hindoo origin: in this city the amiable Bishop Heber visited a house which he has described. It belonged to two minors, the sons of an opulent citizen. It was a building of striking appearance, and had a large vacant area before the door. The house was very irregular, and built round a small court, two sides of which were taken up by the dwelling-house, and the others by the offices. It was four lofty stories in height, with a tower over the gate, of one story more. The front had small windows of various forms, some of them projecting on brackets, and beautifully carved, and a great part of the wall itself was covered with carved patterns of sprigs, leaves, and flowers, like an old-fashioned paper. The whole was of stone, but painted a deep red. The general effect of the house was very much like that of some of the palaces at Venice, as represented in Canaletti's views. There was an entrance-gateway, with a groined arch of rich carving, and on each side was a deep, richly-carved recess, like a shrine, in which were idols, with lamps before them,—the household gods of the family. The inner court was covered with plantains

* The price demanded for a shawl-carpet of very large size was 10 000*l.*, and this was said to be far below its value.

and rose-trees, with a raised and ornamented well in its centre: on the left hand a narrow and steep flight of stone steps led to the first floor. On this floor were several rooms, not very large, but beautifully carved, the principal one, which occupied the first floor of the gateway, having an arcade round it. The centre, about fifteen feet square, was raised and covered with a carpet. The arcade round was flagged with stones, and was so contrived that on a very short notice four streams of water, one in the centre of each side, descended from the roof like a permanent shower-bath, and fell into stone basins, sunk beneath the floor, and covered with a sort of open fretwork, also of stone. "These rooms," says Bishop Heber, "were hung with a good many English prints, of the common paltry description which was fashionable twenty years ago, such as *Sterne* and poor *Maria*, (the boys supposed this to be a doctor feeling a lady's pulse,) the *Sorrows* of *Werter*, &c., together with a daub of the present Emperor of Delhi, and several portraits in oil of a much better kind, of the father of these boys, some of his powerful native friends and employers, and of a very beautiful woman, of European complexion, but in an Eastern dress, of whom the boys knew nothing, or would say nothing more, than that the picture was painted for their father by *Hall-jee* of *Patna*. I did not indeed repeat the question, because I knew the reluctance with which all Eastern nations speak of their women, but it certainly had the appearance of a portrait, and, as well as the old *Haboo's* picture, would have been called a creditable painting in most gentlemen's houses in England."

The houses of the Mohammedan inhabitants of India do not differ in any marked degree from those of Persia or Turkey: the morals, the religion, and the general social arrangements, being nearly the same. In the southern provinces of India, such as *Mysore*, &c., the houses are of very large dimensions, inclosing numerous courts, surrounded by buildings. There is also a very remarkable class of erections to be seen in the hilly districts towards the western shore of the peninsula: these are called *hill-forts*. On the very summit of a hill are often built, not only the fortification necessary for the defence of a place, but numerous residences both for the governors and the governed. There are but few fortified places in the world more formidable, in a military point of view, than these forts; because not only are the walls and general defensive arrangements of a very complete kind, but the hill on which they are situated is often so precipitous, that it is with the utmost difficulty the ascent to them is accomplished.

The countries to the south-east of India, such as the *Birman Empire*, *Siam*, *Malaya*, &c., do not display such specimens of elegant buildings as are to be found in India, and therefore need not occupy much of our attention. The nature of the houses, in and near the *Birman Empire*, may be judged of from the following remarks of *Symes*, in his *Embassy to Awa*:—"The streets of *Pegu* are spacious, as are those of all the *Birman* towns that I have seen. The new town is well paved with brick, which the ruins of the old plentifully supply; and on each side of the way there is a drain to carry off the water. The houses of the meanest peasants of *Pegu*, and throughout the *Birman* empire, possess manifest advantages over Indian dwellings, by being raised from the ground either on wooden posts or bamboos, according to the size of the building. The habitations of the higher ranks are usually elevated six or eight feet, and those of the humbler classes, three or four. There are no brick buildings either in *Pegu* or *Rangoon*, except such as belong to the king, or are dedicated to the divinity *Gaudma*; his majesty having prohibited the use of brick or stone in private buildings. The houses, therefore, are all made of matting, or of sheathing-boards, supported on bamboos or posts; but from their being composed of such combustible materials the inhabitants are under continual dread of fire, against which they take every precaution. The roofs are lightly covered, and at each door stands a long bamboo, with an iron hook at the end, to pull down the thatch. There is also another pole, with a grating of iron at the extremity, about three feet square, to suppress flame by pressure. Almost every house has earthen pots, filled with water, on the roof; and a particular class of people, whose business it is to extinguish fires, perambulate the streets during the night."

The eastern part of Asia is occupied by that remarkable people, the Chinese, a people who seem to pride themselves in being different in manners, in dress, in language, in manufactures, from every other; who think that their country is the centre of civilization, and that the Europeans

are a sort of barbarous race inhabiting some remote corner of the earth. The houses of the wealthy in China bear a considerable resemblance to those which have been brought to light at *Pompeii*. They consist, generally speaking, of a ground floor, containing several apartments, which are lighted by windows looking into a central court. The principal apartment is near the entrance, and is devoted to the reception of visitors, &c. The inner apartments are separated from each other by doorways covered with silk hangings. The houses are frequently entered by a triple gateway, consisting of a large folding door in the middle, and a smaller one on each side: the large entrance is for distinguished visitors, and the smaller for those of humbler rank. It is not unusual to see cylindrical lanterns hung at the sides of the gate, on which the name and title of the inhabitant are written, so as to be read by night as well as by day. In the best houses, there are seldom any stairs, except a few at the entrance. The foundations of the houses are of extremely solid stone-work, not unfrequently of granite. The walls are of blue brick, and frequently have an artificial surface laid on them. Stucco-work or considerable delicacy, representing animals, flowers, fruit, &c., is frequently seen, and is executed at a low price. Inner partition walls are often divided into compartments which are filled with a kind of fret-work of porcelain. The roof is covered with tiles, whose transverse section approaches to a semicircle: they are ranged along with their concave side uppermost, to serve as channels for the rain; other tiles are then laid with their concave side downwards, so as to hide the joinings of the tiles:—it is supposed that this plan was derived from the use of split bamboos, as is customary among the Malays.

Sir G. Staunton describes the house of a mandarin eye which may be taken as a representative of the more costly dwellings. The whole inclosure of the dwelling was in the form of a parallelogram, and surrounded by a high brick wall, the outside of which exhibited a plain blank surface, except near one of its angles, where the gateway opened into a narrow street, little promising the handsome structure within. The wall in its whole length supported the upper ridge of roof, whose lower edges resting upon an interior wall parallel to the other, formed a long range of buildings divided into apartments for servants and offices. The rest of the inclosure was subdivided into several quadrangular courts of different sizes. In each quadrangle were buildings upon platforms of granite, and surrounded by a colonnade. The columns were of wood, nearly sixteen feet in height, and as many inches in diameter at the lower end, decreasing to the upper extremity about one-sixth. They had neither capital nor base, according to the strict meaning of these terms in Grecian architecture, nor any divisions of that part called the entablature, it being plain up to the cornice: at the lower end they were let into hollows cut into stones for their reception, and which formed a circular ring round each somewhat in the Tuscan manner. Between the columns, for about one-fourth the length of the shaft from the cornice downwards, was carved and ornamented wood-work, which might be termed the entablature, and was of a different colour from the columns, which were universally red. This colonnade served to support that part of the roof which projected beyond the wall-plate in a curve, turning up at the angles. By means of these roofed colonnades, every part of these extensive buildings might be visited under cover. The number of pillars throughout the whole was not fewer than six hundred.

Annexed to the principal apartment was an elevated building, intended for the purposes of a private theatre and concert room, with retiring apartments behind, and a gallery for spectators round it. None of the buildings were above one story high, except that which composed the ladies' apartment during the residence of the owner: it was situated in the inmost quadrangle. The front consisted of one long and lofty hall, with windows of Chinese paper, through which no objects could be distinguished on the other side. At the back of this hall was a gallery, at a height of about ten feet, which led to several small rooms, lighted only from the hall. These inner windows were of silk gauze, stretched on frames of wood, and worked by the needle with representations of flowers, fruit, birds, and insects; others were painted in water-colours. This apartment was fitted up in a neater style, though upon a smaller scale, than most of the others. The whole of this part of the building was calculated for private apartments. In one of the outer quadrangles was a basin or pond of water, in the midst of which was built a stone room, exactly in the shape of one of the

covered barges of the country. In others of the quadrangles were planted trees, and in the largest, a heap of rocks was rudely piled; and at one end was a spot laid out for a garden in miniature, but not yet finished.

5. HOUSES OF AMERICA.

Under the general name of America are included as great a diversity of countries as were, perhaps, ever classed together. There is Canada, with its British institutions mingled with those of the French inhabitants of the Lower Province;—the United States, with its northern states almost English, and its southern almost Spanish;—Mexico, with its Spanish character engrafted upon the ancient Aztecs;—and the numerous states of South America, all of which once belonged to Spain and Portugal, but all of which are now republics, or something approaching thereto:—lastly, there are the native Indian tribes, from the fur-hunters of the frozen regions in the north, to Patagonia in the south. It may well be supposed that the dwellings, as well as the character of the inhabitants vary exceedingly in different parts of this wide tract. Still, we may class all under three heads,—Indian extraction, English extraction, and Spanish or Portuguese extraction. The dwellings of the Indians we need not consider here, for they universally come under the denomination of “rude” habitations. Those of Canada, and the northern portions of the United States, we may omit for a different reason, viz., the better classes of habitations very closely resemble those of England. We shall therefore merely offer a few remarks on those parts which have once been either Spanish or Portuguese colonies.

Humboldt considers the modern city of Mexico to be one of the finest cities ever built by Europeans. There are but few cities that can be compared to it, for the uniform level of the ground on which it is built, the regularity and breadth of the streets, and the extent of the public places or squares. The architecture is generally of a very pure style; and there are edifices of a very beautiful construction. The exterior of the houses is not loaded with ornament. Two sorts of hewn stone (the porous amygdaloid called *tetzontli*, and especially a porphyry of vitreous feldspar without quartz,) give to the Mexican buildings an air of solidity, and sometimes of magnificence. There are none of those wooden balconies and galleries to be seen which disfigure so much all the European cities in both the Indies. The balustrades and gates are all of Biscay iron, ornamented with bronze; and the houses, instead of roofs, have terraces like those in Italy, and other southern countries. Many of the streets are nearly two miles in length, perfectly level and straight, and with the ends terminating in a view of the mountains that surround the valley in which the city is situated. The houses are, in general, of a uniform height, most of them having three stories, each from fifteen to twenty feet high. The fronts of most of the houses are painted in distemper, white, crimson, brown, or light green; and owing to the dryness of the atmosphere, they retain their beauty unimpaired for many years. Some inscriptions are painted upon them taken from Scripture, or stanzas addressed to the Virgin. Many of the houses are entirely covered with glazed porcelain in a variety of elegant designs, by which a rich mosaic-like appearance is produced. The walls of the great staircases are frequently covered in the same manner, and mixed with a profusion of gilding, which in contrast with the blue and white porcelain has a splendid effect.

There are no other cities or towns of Mexico at all meriting notice in respect of their dwellings, as the farther we recede from the capital the more does a commingling of European and Indian manners become perceptible.

At the southward of Mexico, and occupying the northern portion of South America, are numerous states which were once Spanish but are now republican; but anarchy so reigns there, that we know but little of the actual condition of the towns and houses.

The residences of the inhabitants of Chili may be judged of from those of its capital, *Santiago*. This city is divided into rectangular and equal squares, separated by streets forty feet broad. Each compartment or square measures about four hundred feet each way; and each square is called a *quadro*. The streets are ill-paved with small round stones brought from the bed of the river, and have a gutter through the middle; but the best streets are paved on one side with slabs of porphyry, quarried from a neighbouring hill. The great central square, or *plaza*, contains the house of the director, the palace of justice, the prison, and other public offices, together with the cathedral, the bishop's

palace, and private residences. All these buildings are built of brick, plastered, and whitewashed, and present no specimens of architectural elegance. The general nature of the private dwellings in the city, even those inhabited by the wealthy classes, may be estimated from the fact, that the usual materials are ill-shaped sun-dried bricks, and mud instead of mortar. The cathedral is the only stone building in the city.

Valparaiso, the principal port of Chili, consists of little more than one street: the houses are huddled together without order:—the church is built chiefly of mud. There is a suburb called *Almendral*, the houses of which are small and incommensurable, of one ground-floor only, built of sun-dried bricks, plastered with mud and whitewashed. Some have rude corridors projecting over the foot-way; others have raised brick paths in front of their houses; but generally the foot-path is merely a raised heap of earth. Some of the houses are roofed with tiles, while others are thatched with rushes, grass or palm-leaves; some have passages leading from the street; but in most cases, the door opens directly from the street to the apartments; and as many of them have no light but what they receive from the door, this door is generally left open. Some of the rooms have small windows with panelled shutters, having clumsy wooden bars in front, rudely carved: some few are painted red; but generally they are not painted at all.

It will thus be seen that Chili does not present much to call forth admiration in the construction or appearance of its houses. Indeed along the whole western coast of South America, but little attention seems to be paid to the construction of private dwellings; for earthquakes are so frequent that anything lofty would almost inevitably be made a heap of ruins. Ulloa's description of the houses of Lima, the capital of Peru, though requiring alterations in some parts to suit it to the state of things at the present day, may be taken as a tolerably near approach to the truth. He says:—“The houses, though for the most part low, are commodious, and make a good appearance. They are all of baxareque and quinchá. They appear indeed to be composed of more solid materials, both with regard to the thickness of the principal walls, and the imitation of cornices on them.” The principal parts are of wood, morticed into the rafters of the roof. The walls are lined within and without with wild canes and osiers, so that the timber-work is wholly inclosed. The osiers are plastered over with clay, and whitewashed. Cornices and porticos of rough workmanship are then added, and whitewashed to imitate stone. The roofs are flat, and covered only so far as is necessary to keep out wind and sun. Such is the general character of the houses in Lima. Those which are inhabited by Europeans are in many cases built somewhat in the style prevalent in their own country; but always with attention to the necessary character of being low, seldom exceeding two stories in height, and very often not exceeding one. Mr. Miers, a recent traveller in South America, describes the houses at Mendoza, an important town in the *La Plata* provinces, as being nearly such as we have here described:—all of one story: built of adobes, (sun-dried bricks,) plastered with mud, and whitewashed. Even the governor's house was of this character.

On crossing to the eastern shore of South America, the city of Buenos Ayres does not seem to present many more attractions than those we have described,—considered with reference to the houses. Mr. Miers says, “The houses fronting the beach I mistook for gaols, as they had no glass sashes, and the open windows were defended by iron gratings; but on entering the town, I found all the houses constructed in the same manner, mostly of one ground floor: their deserted appearance, and shabby exterior, bore more the semblance of gaols than the habitations of an industrious, civilized, and free people.” Mr. Miers and his companions were lodged and entertained at the house of one of the most respectable inhabitants; and the mode of taking meals, &c., may serve to convey some idea of the manners of the inhabitants. Mr. M. was placed at the top of the family table,—the usual seat of guests, according to the custom of the country. Three black female slaves waited at table. About twenty dishes, of different sorts, were brought, each one after the other was removed,—containing bread and vermicelli soup, different kinds of stews, boiled beef, roast veal, lettuce salad, and various sorts of vegetables. The wish was, that the guests should eat some of every dish,—no easy matter among such a number. After dinner, one of the slaves said a long unintelligible grace, upon the conclusion of which all the family crossed themselves

upon their foreheads, mouths, and breasts: the cloth was not removed, but was kept for the dessert, which consisted of a profusion of ripe figs, peaches, nectarines, apples, pears, and oranges. Nothing but water was drunk at or after dinner. A basin and towel were brought, in which all the company washed their hands in the same water.

Rio Janeiro, the capital of Brazil, is not provided with houses of a kind proportionate to the extent and importance of the city. The streets, which are straight and narrow, are paved with granite, but are scarcely provided with any light at night. The houses, which are generally of two stories, and low and narrow in proportion to their depth, are, for the most part, built of blocks of granite: the upper story however, is often of wood. The thresholds, door-posts, lintels, and window-frames, are of massy quartz or feldspar, brought from Bahia in a state ready for use. The roofs are universally covered with semi-cylindrical tiles. The lower story is commonly occupied by a shop or warehouse; the second (and third, if there be one) by the family apartments, to which there are long and narrow passages taken from the ground floor, and communicating with the street. The houses used formerly to have an appendage called a *jealousy*, or *jalousie*, which were gloomy projections from the upper windows. These jalousies were raised on a platform of stone, two and half feet broad, and extended to the top of the window. They were formed of lattice-work of a fanciful pattern, divided into panels or compartments, some of which were fitted up with hinges at the top, so as to form a sort of flap, which, when opened a little way, allowed persons in the balcony to look down into the street without being seen themselves. They gave to the fronts of the houses a dull, heavy, and suspicious appearance, and have been superseded by light open balconies.

Until the recent changes in the political circumstances of Brazil, the houses of Rio Janeiro, as well as the general manufactures produced, felt the ill-effects of a lazy spirit that used to distinguish the white inhabitants: they were not clever artisans,—they were too lazy to attain skill,—and they were too proud to carry even their own working tools through the streets. Mr. Luccock has given an amusing account of the combined effect of these three blots:—"It was necessary to open a lock, of which I had lost the key; and the skill necessary to pick it was so rare, that the master and waiter of the hotel where I then lodged, were greatly perplexed with my inquiries, at what place it was to be found. At length they advised me to apply to an English carpenter who had been settled in Rio about two years, and employed several men, one of whom he requested to go with

me, for then masters did not venture to command; assuring me that the man would execute what I wanted. He detained me a long time, but, to compensate for the delay, made his appearance, at last, in full dress, with a cocked hat, shoe and knee-buckles, and other corresponding paraphernalia. At the door of the house he still loitered, wishing to hire some black man to carry his hammer, chisel, and another small instrument. I suggested that they were light, and proposed to carry a part or the whole of them myself; but this would have been as great a practical solecism as using his own hands. The gentleman waited patiently until a negro appeared; then made his bargain, and proceeded in due state, followed by his temporary servant. The task was soon finished, by breaking the lock, instead of picking it, when the man of importance, making me a profound bow, stalked off with his follower." Since the period of Mr. Luccock's visit, however, many changes and improvements have occurred.

There is a little spot at the southern extremity of Africa, we mean the Cape of Good Hope, to which we will make a brief allusion, before we bring to a conclusion our allotted task. "The streets of Cape Town," says Mr. Burchell, "though not paved, are kept always in excellent order, and derive an agreeable freshness from trees of oak and pinaster, planted here and there on either side." The houses are built of brick, and faced with a stucco of lime. They are decorated in front with cornices and many architectural ornaments, and frequently with figures both in high and low relief. In front of each house is a paved platform (called the *stoep*, or *step*) usually eight or ten feet wide, and commonly from two to four feet above the level of the street. It is ascended by steps, and has, generally, a seat at each end; and here the inhabitants frequently walk or sit to enjoy the air, or to converse with passing friends. The roofs are flat having no greater inclination than is just sufficient to throw off the rain water; and they form a very commodious terrace. On account of the mildness of the Cape winters, fire-places are nowhere seen excepting in the kitchens. Within the houses, to an eye accustomed to the elegant decorations and furniture of an English apartment, have the appearance of a want of comfort, and, not having a plastered ceiling, the bare joists and floor above give them the look of an unfinished building. But the loftiness and size of the rooms render them respectable, and contribute greatly to their coolness in summer. This description, however, was more applicable some years ago than it is at present, for the English residents are sure to introduce English habits and customs more or less into the country.



AN INDIAN HAREM.

TO OUR READERS.

THE close of this, the Nineteenth Volume of the *Saturday Magazine*, affords a favourable opportunity for considering the state of the popular literature of this country at the period when our arduous task commenced*—of taking a retrospect of our labours in fulfilment of the duties then undertaken by us—of stating the mode in which we propose to continue our services—and of making a general acknowledgment of the valuable advice and assistance with which we have been favoured by a numerous body of friendly correspondents.

It must be in the recollection of our readers, that at the time when we commenced our undertaking the humbler classes of the community were largely supplied with cheap pamphlets, of the most dangerous and deplorable tendency;—writings in which the most holy things were lightly treated of,—the most endearing of human ties derided,—and our revered institutions held up to open scorn and contempt. Works of this character could be superseded only by creating a taste for something better, and we have reason to believe that the *Saturday Magazine* has, under the Divine blessing, had a large share in creating and supplying that wholesome taste which is now so general.

We cannot but feel gratitude and satisfaction at the success which has attended our efforts, at the same time that we experience the pleasing consciousness of having remitted no endeavours on our part to deserve and fully to justify the public approbation. We may, at least, claim the negative merit of having most carefully excluded from our pages every expression and sentiment which can be considered as indicative of party feelings and objectionable principles, or which might be likely to offend good taste and delicacy of feeling.

Bearing in mind the responsibility attaching to the management of a work which finds its way into the hands of so many thousands, and the power which it gives of inculcating the most salutary as well as the most fatal opinions, we have uniformly endeavoured to infuse a Christian character and tendency into every branch of popular knowledge. We have not arrogated to ourselves the office of instructors on sacred topics, by interfering with the labours of those whose especial department it is to set forth and to defend the principles of our established faith, nor have we permitted our pages to become the vehicle for controversy and discussion;—but we have nevertheless been anxious to give such a general bearing to our various articles as to subserve the purposes of religion, and to show, wherever the subject has naturally led us to do so, the blessings and advantages we derive from the position, in which, as members of a Christian community and of a Scriptural church, we are privileged to stand.

It is sufficiently evident that the object of a popular periodical, such as the *Saturday Magazine*, is to administer to the instruction and amusement, not of one class of readers in particular, but of all: so that into whatever hands the work may fall, there may be found among its various subjects something to suit the tastes and inclinations of every reader. The man of literature, in glancing over the contents of such a work, will meet with some notice of eminent men or of their writings, and be able to refresh his memory or even to add to his knowledge from this humble source. The scientific man

* "The dangers to which the Faith is exposed are not confined to the open assaults of the infidel and the blasphemer. It cannot be doubted, that great and extensive mischief may arise to religion, and to the eternal welfare of mankind, should our general literature, and the various institutions of society, acquire a character and tendency decidedly contrary to the principles and practice of Christianity. That such has been, for some time past, the general and growing tendency of much of our popular literature, will hardly be denied; but the extent of the evil is known only to those who have made it the subject of particular investigation. It has pervaded more or less every branch of it, and in some departments has evidently been the result of deliberate and systematic operations. This has been the case more especially with cheap periodical literature, and with works of education. Books intended for the instruction of the rising generation have, in some cases, been made instruments for teaching the doctrines of Materialism under the disguise of scientific principles. In others, where religious instruction was indispensable, it has been of the most inefficient and exceptionable kind. But the prevailing and most successful method has been to separate knowledge from religion, and to keep religion altogether out of sight. This has been the principle upon which too many works of instruction have lately been conducted. And thus they have become mischievous in a greater degree in proportion to the popularity which they have acquired.

"The same course has been pursued with regard to cheap periodicals, which have lately become so considerable a branch of literature. The disreputable part of them have been made vehicles for the diffusion of infidel opinions, which have been conveyed in every shape that was likely to render them agreeable to the class of persons to whom they were addressed. Everything has been done in order to enlist the passions on their side; they have been mingled with entertaining literature of every kind, that the poison might be rendered more palatable to general readers. And, until lately, except in a few instances, the whole force of this new power was directed against the principles and institutions of religion. Nor has the magnitude and extent of this power been as yet completely developed, or its effects fully known. It has, however, been ascertained that the circulation of such papers in and from London alone amounted, in May last, to the number of 300,000 weekly: and of these not one was professedly engaged in the defence or support of religion and its institutions. The greater part of them were openly and avowedly hostile to everything which is sacred and dear to our religious feelings, and the remainder wholly dedicated to other objects."

Report of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, for the year 1832.

may also expect to find an abstract, however brief, of the inventions and discoveries, which render the present age remarkable above all that have preceded it. The lover of Nature will not be disappointed of information respecting his favourite study, but will find the animals, the plants, the minerals in which he is interested, brought under his notice from time to time, either in the lighter sketches of natural scenery, or the more scientific arrangements of accurate description. The agriculturist, the manufacturer, the mechanic, and even the intelligent operative, will also find easy details respecting the various branches of industry in which they are engaged, and the productions with which the civilized world is enriched by means of their various pursuits.

With this general view of the objects of a cheap periodical work, we have supplied to the readers of the *Saturday Magazine* information on a large variety of topics, suitable to the capacities of a corresponding variety of readers. Eager curiosity and desire for knowledge, though in themselves good, inasmuch as they mark a vigorous intellect, and may be productive of highly-beneficial results, are yet so often found to operate without subordination to any higher principle, that we cannot be too cautious in selecting food wherewith to appease them. We may injudiciously stimulate the appetite till it can only be satisfied with false and unnatural excitements, or we may with equal ill effect endeavour to allay its cravings with harsh and ungrateful aliment, from which it will turn with disgust. There are subjects which seem at first sight to have little bearing on happiness or virtue, and which will therefore be necessarily excluded from publications of a professedly religious character, yet inasmuch as these subjects are capable of meeting the desire for knowledge in a way that, to say the least, cannot be prejudicial to the moral interest of the reader, and as they may at the same time have a certain effect in refining the taste, enlarging the field of knowledge, or suggesting innocent employment of time, it appears highly injudicious to reject them in a work whose object it is to combine amusement with instruction.

We may here allude to the mode of illustrating the *Saturday Magazine*. Wherever a piece of mechanism, a manufacturing process, a description of a building or country, seemed to require the aid of the pencil to elucidate and illustrate the letter-press description, such illustrations have been given, of sufficient distinctness for the purpose in view, but without any pretension to high artistic excellence. Every one accustomed to the usages of commercial life must be aware that to ensure continuance to a periodical publication, and to fulfil the intentions for which it was established, a remunerating profit must be obtained; without this, the honour may be great, but must be short lived. The cost incidental to the production of highly-finished illustrations is in general incompatible with the permanent success of a work sold at so low a price as ours. The engravings in our Magazine are therefore intended for illustration rather than for decoration. We are contented to take our stand on the general merits of the work, the literature of which has gradually elevated it to a higher place than it was originally intended to occupy among the periodical publications of the day, and gained it an introduction to every class of society.

In looking back on our past course, we are conscious of having presented to our numerous readers a safe and useful miscellany, calculated to lead them onward from simpler to more abstruse knowledge, and to give a wholesome direction to their tastes and feelings. The testimony of correspondents has given us frequent and pleasing confirmation of this belief; and we may here remark, that the information we have received from this source has always been most acceptable; the suggestions conveyed have met with serious attention, and have not been adopted or declined on insufficient grounds. From our limited space, as well as from a desire to avoid controversy and personal feeling or party views, we are not able specially to notice the different communications we are favoured with, yet they are ever regarded as welcome indications of the wishes and opinions of our readers, and, as such, we are glad to have the present opportunity of acknowledging their value.

During the coming year we hope to enter on several new and interesting subjects of inquiry, and where we may hitherto have appeared to slight the communications of any of our readers, it will be seen that they have only been deferred with a view to entering the more fully into them on a future occasion. The treasures of knowledge are inexhaustible; and the chief difficulty consists in making a judicious selection for the benefit of a variety of readers. In this task we shall continue to avail ourselves of the assistance of competent and experienced writers whose time and attention are devoted almost exclusively to the work.

NEW BOOKS AND NEW EDITIONS,

PUBLISHED BY

JOHN W. PARKER, LONDON.

THE LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE OF THE LATE SIR ASTLEY PASTON COOPER, BART.; from Documents bequeathed by him for the purpose. By **BRANSBY B. COOPER, Esq., F.R.S.** Two Volumes, Octavo, with Portrait from the Picture by Sir T. Lawrence, P.R.A. *Nearly Ready.*

PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY, illustrated by the Acts of the **PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS.** By the Right Rev. **RICHARD MANT, D.D.,** Lord Bishop of Down and Connor. Octavo. *Nearly Ready.*

By the same Author,

HISTORY of the CHURCH of IRELAND. Two Volumes, Octavo, 17s. each.
A New Edition of the First Volume is now Ready.

A CYCLE of CELESTIAL OBJECTS, being the Result of **OBSERVATIONS** made at Bedford, arranged in a practical manner for the Use of **NAVAL, MILITARY,** and **PRIVATE OBSERVERS.** By Captain **W. H. SMYTH, R.N., F.R.S., F. Astron. Soc., &c** Octavo, with Numerous Illustrations. *In the Press.*

NATIONAL PROVERBS, IN THE PRINCIPAL LANGUAGES OF EUROPE. Printed Line for Line in English, French, Italian, Spanish, and German. A small Ornamental Volume. By **CAROLINE WARD.** *Nearly Ready.*

HYDROLOGY, or The WORLD of WATERS. By Miss **R. M. ZORNLIN,** Author of *Physical Geography, Recreations in Geology, &c.* *In the Press.*

ESSAYS on NERVOUS DISEASES. By **R. B. TODD, M.D., F.R.S.,** Physician to King's College Hospital, and Professor of Physiology in King's College, London.

THE PHYSIOLOGICAL ANATOMY, and PHYSIOLOGY, of MAN. By **R. B. TODD, M.D., F.R.S.,** and **W. BOWMAN, F.R.S.,** of King's College, London. With Numerous Original Illustrations. *Preparing for the Press.*

THE PUBLIC ECONOMY of ATHENS. By **AUGUSTUS BÆCKH,** Professor in the University of Berlin. Translated from the German by **GEORGE CORNEWALL LEWIS, Esq., A.M.,** late Student of Christ Church, One of the Translators of **MULLER'S Dorians.** New Edition, Revised. One Volume, Octavo. *In the Press.*

PINDAR'S EPINICIAN ODES, and the FRAGMENTS of HIS LOST COMPOSITIONS; Revised and Explained by the Rev. **JOHN WILLIAM DONALDSON, M.A.,** Head Master of the Bury School. Octavo, 16s.

By the same Author,

THE NEW CRATYLUS; or, Contributions towards a more accurate Knowledge of the Greek Language. 17s.

BRANDE'S MANUAL of CHEMISTRY; thoroughly Revised and greatly Enlarged; and Incorporating all New Facts and Discoveries in the Science, Foreign as well as British. By WILLIAM THOMAS BRANDE, F.R.S.; of the Royal Mint; Professor of Chemistry in the Royal Institution. The Fifth Edition, (1500 closely printed pages, Octavo,) with numerous Illustrations, 35s.

PRINCIPLES OF MECHANISM. By R. WILLIS, M.A., F.R.S., Jacksonian Professor of Natural and Experimental Philosophy in the University of Cambridge. Octavo, with 250 Illustrations, 15s.

THE MECHANICS OF ENGINEERING. By the Rev. W. WHEWELL, B.D., F.R.S., Master of Trinity College, and Professor of Moral Philosophy, Cambridge. 9s.

By the same Author,

I. THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE INDUCTIVE SCIENCES, Founded upon their History. Two Volumes, Octavo, 30s.

II. A HISTORY OF THE INDUCTIVE SCIENCES, from the Earliest Times to the Present. Three Volumes, Octavo, 2l. 2s.

III. On the PRINCIPLES of ENGLISH UNIVERSITY EDUCATION. 5s.

IV. THE MECHANICAL EUCLID. 5s. 6d.

V. THE DOCTRINE OF LIMITS, with Applications. 9s.

VI. ON THE FOUNDATIONS OF MORALS. 3s. 6d.

THE ELEMENTS OF DESCRIPTIVE GEOMETRY. By the Rev. T. G. HALL, M.A., Professor of Mathematics in King's College, London. Eighty Illustrations, 6s. 6d.

By the same Author,

I. THE ELEMENTS OF ALGEBRA. 6s. 6d.

II. A TREATISE on the DIFFERENTIAL and INTEGRAL CALCULUS. Third Edition, 12s. 6d.

EXAMPLES of the PROCESSES of the DIFFERENTIAL and INTEGRAL CALCULUS. Collected by D. F. GREGORY, M.A., Fellow of Trinity College. Octavo, 18s.

THE UNDULATORY THEORY, as APPLIED to the DISPERSION of LIGHT; including the Substance of several Papers, printed in the Philosophical Transactions, and other Journals. By the Rev. BADEN POWELL, M.A., F.R.S., F.R.A.S., F.G.S., Savilian Professor in the University of Oxford. Octavo, 9s.

A PRACTICAL ARABIC GRAMMAR. By DUNCAN STEWART, Esq. Octavo, 16s.

LECTURES in DIVINITY, delivered in the University of Cambridge, by JOHN HEY, D.D., as Norrissian Professor, from 1780 to 1795. *A New Edition, Revised, in Two Large Volumes, Octavo, 30s.*

COMMENTS, EXPLANATORY and PRACTICAL, upon the EPISTLES for the Sundays, Fast, and Holidays throughout the Year; for the use of Families. By the Rev. J. F. HONE, M.A., Vicar of Tirley, Gloucester. *Nearly Ready.*

